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Remarks/Arguments

Claims 20-117 are currently pending in the application. Of these claims, claims 20-25, 27-29, 47-50, 66, 68-71, 73-75, 86-88, 103 and 105-112 have been amended and claims 26, 46, 51, 72, 85, and 115 have been canceled. Applicant has reviewed the specification for errors, as suggested by the Examiner.

All pending claims are fully supported by the specification, and no new matter has been added to the application. For at least the reasons presented below, Applicant asserts that the pending claims are in condition for allowance.

1. Drawings

Please note that the recitation for Figure 144 in the Description of the Drawings section found on page 18 of the specification has been deleted, since there is no Figure 144. This recitation was presented in error.

2. Specification

The specification is objected to for what the Examiner calls informalities.

Applicant has reviewed the specification for errors, as suggested by the Examiner, and have amended the specification as outlined above. Submitted herewith is a copy of page 230 of the specification which appears to be missing from the Examiner's copy of the application file.

3. 35 U.S.C. § 103 Rejections

Claims 20-117 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Dworkin*, U.S. Patent No. 4,992,940 in view of *McNamara et al.*, U.S. Patent No. 5,805,458.

Applicant opposes this rejection since *Dworkin* and *McNamara* fail to disclose all limitations of Applicant's claims, as amended above. Specifically, *Dworkin* and *McNamara* fail to disclose that a framework manager that provides a network for use by independent first and second business entities for collaborative planning, as claimed by Applicant. To the

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contrary, *Dworkin* discloses a system and method for automated selection of computer equipment for purchase. This is quite different than Applicant's Invention. In *Dworkin*, there are two types of parties, the system user (buyer) searching for products to purchase, and vendors selling products. There is no disclosure or suggestion of a framework manager creating/providing/managing the network for use by two business entities independent of a framework manager, as claimed by Applicant. Moreover, *Dworkin* only discloses the purchase of computer equipment, by provided vendors. There is no disclosure or suggestion of service providers, resellers and manufacturers being business entities on the network, as claimed by Applicants. Furthermore, contrary to statements in the outstanding Office Action regarding replication and synchronization, *Dworkin* fails to disclose or suggest storing capacity data, wherein storing capacity data includes replication and synchronization capabilities. These capabilities improve the efficiency of the network. Applicant asserts that such capabilities are not inherent to a database environment as stated in the outstanding Office Action regarding claim 51. Furthermore, the inherency argument is not proper in the 103(a) rejection. The replication and synchronization capabilities are not disclosed or suggested in *Dworkin*, nor *McNamara*, therefore, this limitation is not disclosed by the art of record and could not be a part of a proper 103(a) rejection.

As to *McNamara*, it fails to disclose all of the limitations of Applicant's claims, as amended above. Furthermore, Applicant asserts that *McNamara* fails to overcome the deficiencies of *Dworkin* outlined above. *McNamara* discloses a home utility demand monitoring system and control. Specifically, *McNamara* discloses a home utility monitoring system that includes an at home network with the ability to communicate with utility companies. This system monitors and manages the energy usage of a home. This is quite different than Applicant's invention, as claimed. *McNamara* fails to disclose or suggest a framework manager creating/providing/managing the network for use by two business entities independent of a framework manager, as claimed by Applicant. In *McNamara*, there is no disclosure or suggestion of vendors, resellers and manufacturers being business entities on the network, as claimed by Applicants. Furthermore, contrary to statements in the outstanding Office Action regarding replication and synchronization, *McNamara* fails to disclose or suggest storing capacity data, wherein storing capacity data includes replication and synchronization capabilities.

In summary for at least the reasons above, *Dworkin* and *McNamara*, either alone or in combination, fails to disclose or suggest all of the limitations of Applicant's claims.

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Therefore the rejection of the claims is improper. Accordingly, Applicant requests withdrawal of the 103(a) rejection of the now pending claims.

4. Conclusion

For at least the reasons presented above, Applicant asserts that the application is now in condition for allowance. In the event a telephone conversation would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner may reach the undersigned at (612) 607-7278. If any fees are due in connection with the filing of this paper, then the Commissioner is authorized to charge such fees including fees for any extension of time, to Deposit Account No. 50-1901 (Docket 60021-335501).

Respectfully submitted,



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environment that fulfills the needs of electronic information owners, distributors, and users; financial clearinghouses; and usage information analyzers and resellers.

5 WAF provides a secure, distributed electronic transaction management system for controlling the distribution and/or other usage of electronically provided and/or stored information. WAF controls auditing and reporting of electronic content and/or appliance usage. Users of WAF may include content creators who apply content usage, usage reporting, and/or usage payment related control information to electronic content and/or appliances for users such as end-user organizations,
10 individuals, and content and/or appliance distributors. WAF also securely supports the payment of money owed (including money owed for content and/or appliance usage) by one or more parties to one or more other parties, in the form of electronic credit and/or currency.

15 WAF may be used to migrate most non-electronic, traditional information delivery models (including entertainment, reference materials, catalog shopping, etc.) into an adequately secure digital distribution and usage management and payment context. The distribution and financial pathways managed by a WAF arrangement may include:

20

content creator(s),

distributor(s),

25

redistributor(s),

client administrator(s),

client user(s),

30

financial and/or other clearinghouse(s),

and/or government agencies.